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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, keep us always thankful for Your mercy and grace. May we never take for granted Your generous gifts to us and begin and end each day with words of petition, intercession, and thanksgiving.

Continue to bless our lawmakers. Give them the wisdom to keep our Nation on the sure foundation of Your righteousness. May our Senators be bastions of moral and spiritual power for the coming of Your kingdom of justice and peace. Lord, give them the higher vision to work with integrity and to be content with the judgment of history and the knowledge of Your approval.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. SHAHEEN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following any leader remarks, the Senate will proceed to morning business until 11 a.m. Senators will be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each during that time. The majority will control the first half, the Republicans will control the final half.

Following morning business, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the reauthorization of the Small Business Innovation Act, S. 493. The Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. for the weekly caucus meetings. At 2:15 p.m., Senator COATS will be recognized to deliver his maiden speech. He will be recognized for up to 30 minutes. Rollcall votes in relation to amendments to the small business jobs bill are possible during today's session.

SBIR/STTR

Mr. REID. Madam President, this bill is another jobs bill. It is a very important bill. I did a press event yesterday with the chairman of the committee, Senator LANDRIEU. It was a good meeting. We talked about some of the things that are happening in our States regarding small business under this program that was developed during President Reagan's administration. Some remarkably good things happen in every State.

As to New Hampshire, I do not know which ones happen there, but there are a number of things in every State. In the State of Nevada, wonderful things have occurred. One of the things a smart man decided is that we should not have 9/11-type incidents where people are trapped and cannot get out of high stories. He has an apparatus that goes up and brings people down. For an initial grant of some \$150,000, he was able to do that.

We have another—a battery that is now being used by the military—for \$180,000. It does all these great things improving batteries in vehicles.

This did not occur in Nevada, but one of the amazing things is the electric toothbrush came about as a result of one of these small grants.

Every State in America has benefited from these grants. The program has worked well for almost 30 years, and we are reauthorizing it. That is what we are doing so these programs can continue.

We hope people will offer amendments to improve this legislation and not detract from it. We would like to complete this legislation this week. We know we have the CR coming over probably tonight sometime. We will have to deal with that. The next work period is going to be filled with a lot of business. We are going to soon have to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act. We have many things to do, but the things we have done so far this year are job creating. Not only the small business legislation I just talked about, but the patent bill, the first revision of that in some 60 years, that is 300,000 jobs. We did FAA reauthorization; that is 280,000 jobs.

I hope the House will complete these measures—we are waiting for them; the President is waiting for these matters—rather than doing what they are doing, which is not job creating.

There is a piece in the Washington Post today about how the Republicans are being so shortsighted. For every

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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dollar we spend with the IRS going after people who cheat, we bring in more than \$10 to the Treasury. They are cutting the ability of the IRS to go after people who cheat on paying their taxes. That makes it more difficult for the people who pay their taxes. I hope they will get off the government bashing program they have been on and focus on job creation.

We all know we need to reduce our debt. We are engaged in that, but in a way that is smart, not a way that is, as indicated in that Washington Post article, penny-wise and very pound-foolish.

Will the Chair now announce morning business.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period for the transaction of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE BUDGET

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, last week, Senator INOUE of Hawaii, the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, proposed a bill to fund the government through the end of this fiscal year. It is hard to believe we are almost halfway through this year and still haven't resolved the basic issue of our budget. Our failure to resolve it, lurching from 2 weeks to 3 weeks of funding, may serve some political purpose, but it doesn't serve the purpose of good government because many people who have to make critical decisions that involve more than a momentary glimpse or glance at our fiscal situation are held back.

I met a man last night whose business is to supply the United States with vaccine for anthrax, tuberculosis, and similar things. We have an inadequate stockpile of vaccine. The government has said to him: We want you to produce more vaccine, but we are only funded for 2 more weeks.

He said to me: How can I, as a businessman, make a commitment to produce vaccine with an uncertainty as to whether it will be paid for?

That is a pretty reasonable question, and it reflects the fact that as we move from 2 weeks to 3 weeks of funding, postponements are made in decisions which have an impact on the future of our country.

This morning, I wish to address, as well, something that goes beyond the obvious—stockpiling vaccine—and looks to some of the other aspects of the House Republican budget bill and what it will mean to America if it is adopted. This is a bill which they proudly boast will cut \$100 billion in spending. Most people across America, sensitive to our deficit crisis, say we should start by cutting spending. That is a reasonable request by voters in New Hampshire and Illinois. But there comes a moment when we have to use our best judgment about where cuts should be made and where cuts, when made, would cost us dearly for a long time to come.

Senator INOUE, in his bill, tried to balance \$51 billion in cuts below the President's original budget request in a way that would not hurt our investment in America's future and economic growth.

American innovation has always fueled economic sustainability and job creation. Senator INOUE's bill lays out a wise path toward providing more jobs and less debt—two things we desperately need to do. Under his alternative spending bill, which I supported, the budget for the National Institutes of Health—which is the premier agency for medical research in America—is frozen at \$31 billion, the same amount it received last year. This means the funds required to perform cutting edge breakthrough medical research and new clinical trials for much-needed cures and treatments will be available. It also means that nearly 12,000 jobs across the State of Illinois in hospitals, universities, and medical centers will continue to be supported under the Inouye budget.

Under the House Republican budget, the National Institutes of Health is cut by \$1.6 billion. That is a cut that is severe by any measure. It would cause new construction projects to be halted when it comes to medical research laboratories and put 351,000 U.S. jobs in danger of being lost. We can't afford these shortsighted cuts when our Nation is struggling but is determined that we will come out of this stronger than we went in.

That said, we know that freezing budgets is not going to be enough. Thoughtful and difficult cuts will have to be made. The Senate appropriations bills provide \$6.8 billion for the National Science Foundation. This is a cut of \$573 million from the President's budget, but it is still \$284 million more than was provided in the bill passed by the House. Under the Democratic Senate alternative, we can continue to

fund basic research and create jobs and programs that educate the next generation of scientists in America. That is not possible under the House bill.

As I travel to research laboratories in my State—Argonne National Research Laboratory, Northwestern University Medical Care Center—I meet some of the best and brightest young people I have ever seen in my life. They are from all over the world, and they come here because this is the place to do research and to make the breakthrough findings that will change America and change the world. Thank God for their intelligence and their idealism. But they look at me and say: Senator, am I going to have a job 6 weeks from now? If I am not, tell me now. I have to make a plan with my life.

Maybe they will leave research and go into work for a private company and make more money. Maybe they will go back home to another country where they will be welcomed in their research capacity. So the generation of scientists affected by this decision are as important as the breakthroughs that might be found in the research itself.

The National Science Foundation will continue to provide \$8 million of innovation research to Illinois small businesses under the Inouye bill, but the funding level difference between the House and the Senate and what they want to cut and what we want to cut is dramatic.

Let me give an example: We are working on a new supercomputer at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. It is called Blue Waters. When it is completed, it will be the fastest computer in the world. Most Americans, when asked where is the fastest computer in the world today, would probably say America; we are the leaders. No, it is in China. But we are trying to devise and invent the next computer.

Now, what difference does that make? We know fast computers make quick decisions and help us find ways to solve problems we never even imagined. We are about to sacrifice many of the economic gains we can realize if we go through with the House Republican budget.

The budget for the Department of Energy's Office of Science was also examined and cut by \$388 million to \$4.7 billion for the year. Now, that is a \$200 million cut. It is difficult because the Office of Science supports seven of our National Laboratories. University research centers and private companies use their facilities to create new drugs, biofuels, and solutions to our country's toughest problems. Research done by Abbot Laboratories at the Advanced Photon Source at the Argonne National Laboratory is crucial to the development of an AIDS drug—Kaletra—which is now the world's most prescribed drug for fighting AIDS and the HIV virus. Cutting back on the funds for Argonne National Laboratory, dismissing one-third of their scientists